

Prelim Bits 04-03-2017

INS Viraat

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- INS Viraat, the second aircraft carrier in the Indian naval fleet is soon to be decommissioned. INS Vikrant is India's first aircraft carrier.

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- INS Viraat is the second centaur class aircraft carrier in service.

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- Earlier known as HMS Hermes, it served Royal Navy of UK from 1950 to 1980's and later re-commissioned in Indian Navy in 1987.

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- It holds the Guinness Record for being the oldest-serving warship.

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- It played a pivotal role in the Indian peacekeeping operations in Sri Lanka and the 1999 Kargil War.

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- It also took part in major operations like Op. Parakram - a India Pakistan in the LOC and Op. Pawan by IPKF to take control of Jaffna from the LTTE as part of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord.

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- The latest deployment of Viraat was in the International Fleet Review (IFR-2016) at Visakhapatnam.

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MAVEN

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- The Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution (MAVEN), NASA's spacecraft, has been orbiting Mars for the past two years.

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- MAVEN is studying Mars' upper atmosphere, ionosphere and its interactions with the sun and solar wind.

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- An important aspect of the MAVEN mission is studying how early Mars

lost much of its atmosphere.

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- This atmospheric loss may have been partially responsible for Mars' transition from a planet capable of supporting liquid surface water to the dry, desert world we know today.

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- Recently, MAVEN has avoided its head-on collision with Phobos, the natural satellite of Mars.

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- The other one is Deimos. Phobos is the innermost and larger of the two.

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Ochre Colored Pottery (OCP) Culture

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- When the Indus Valley Civilization was flourishing, a parallel culture called OCP Culture is thought to have co-existed in the fertile plains between the Ganga and the Yamuna.

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- The people who used ochre pottery and their culture are specific to the doab region.

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- The first remnants of OCP culture were found in Hastinapur, in Meerut district, in 1951 and later in Etah district of UP.

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- OCP marked the last stage of the North Indian Bronze Age and was succeeded by the Iron Age.

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- Pottery Culture in Ancient India -

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1. Indus Valley Civilization - Burnt Black Painted Red Ware

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2. Iron Age (1000 BC) - Painted Grey Ware in North India and the Gangetic plain and Red Polished ware in Gujarat Area.

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Nasi II island

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- The island is part of Gahirmatha Scantuary in Odisha, one of the world's largest nesting ground of olive ridley turtles.

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- There are seven species of marine turtles in the world.

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- The Olive Ridley is the smallest of the sea turtles and **omnivorous** in diet.

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- The olive ridleys are found only in warmer waters, including the southern Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

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- They are known for their behavior of synchronized nesting in mass numbers, termed **arribadas**.

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- They nests twice/thrice in a year.

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- They are listed as Vulnerable in IUCN Red List and in Appendix I of CITES.

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- Turtles are adapted to aquatic life whereas Tortoises are almost exclusively land-dwelling animals.

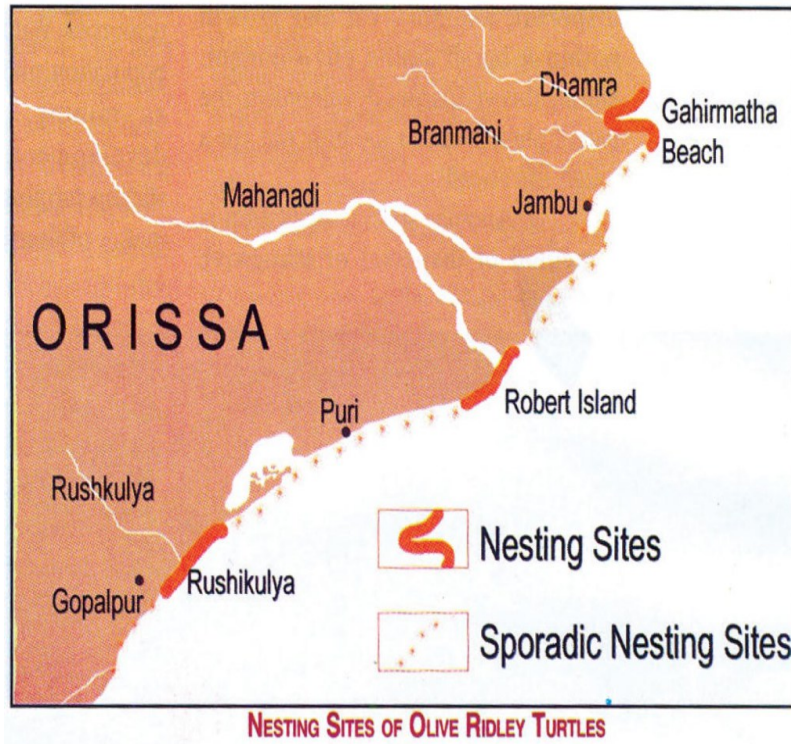
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- The term “terrapins” is sometimes used for turtles that are semi-aquatic.

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